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This article addresses the role of general music education within the framework of cultural diversity. It is generally thought that music itself has a universal dimension that connects people. With the increase in migration and globalisation, music is often described to be 'on the move' or travelling through different cultures and being influenced by new elements (e.g., Rao 2011). Is this notion also valid within the music classroom and how is diversity approached by teachers? Is music education reproducing either a uniform or diverse set repertoire of skills or does it challenge students to develop a broader relationship to music, based on an inclusive, critical and multicultural approach?

We have chosen to investigate this topic by carrying out a case study in Finland, since we have found that the specific Finnish context, with its historical cultural diversity combined with a more recent wave of immigration, can inform us about intercultural processes on a more general and international level. We focus on teachers in Swedish-speaking schools in Finland to investigate how their own minority position in the country might or might not, influence their understanding of cultural diversity in music education.

The article begins with a description of the situated context and a theoretical background in which we draw out our position in relation to multicultural and intercultural education. We then present some empirical evidence based on a study in which interviews were conducted with teachers in four Swedish-speaking schools in Finland. In these interviews, teachers were asked questions concerning their understanding of the relationship between general music education and cultural diversity. The article concludes with a discussion of the social, educational and musical consequences of a culturally diverse approach to and within music as part of general education.

The situated context

Finland is a bilingual country bordered by Sweden in the west and Russia in the east. Finland was part of Sweden until 1809 and after that a Grand Duchy of Russia until it gained independence in 1917. It is currently devoting more attention to multicultural issues due to recent immigration that has augmented historically rooted cultural minorities that include the Swedish-speaking, as well as the Sami and Roma people (Heimonen and Hebert 2012, 164-169). The equal status of the Finnish and Swedish languages was already established in 1863 by the enactment of the Language Statute. The strong status of Swedish is based on the long common history with Sweden. Presently, both Finnish and Swedish are official national languages as secured by the Constitution. Finland is officially bilingual and has two parallel school systems in Finnish and Swedish, although only approximately 5.5 % of the population (of a total of approximately five million citizens) is Swedish-speaking. The national core curriculum (2014) is almost identical in both languages and provides the foundational values and guidelines for schools, teachers and the instruction.

From a multicultural perspective, Finland has been quite a homogenous country but has experienced increased immigration during the last two decades, which is reflected at every educational level. The concept of multicultural education has become a familiar theme in educational research. From a multicultural educational perspective, there has been criticism of multicultural approaches that are presented in the curriculum (Holm and Londen 2010; Dervin *et al*. 2012; Holm and Mansikka 2013). However, a new national core curriculum for basic education has been reformed and implemented in 2016. Seven key areas are mapped as guiding principles for developing educational activity in all subjects within basic education in schools. One of these areas is cultural diversity and linguistic consciousness. Cultural diversity is clearly granted a more substantial role compared with earlier curricula. Openness towards cultural pluralism is emphasised. Moreover, the core curriculum states that space should be given to the idea that a person might identify with more than one culture. This is believed to promote understanding and respect, not only between cultures but also within the school (National Board of Education, 2014, p. 20).

Positioning within multicultural education

The concept of multiculturalism has been widely discussed and even contested in recent times. On a most general level, despite the conceptual varieties, it has been

conceptualised as the recognition of cultural diversity through policies, legal rights and other societal activity. There has even been some discussion of a shift occuring towards what some are calling post-multiculturalism, where a strong national identity mixes with recognition of cultural diversity (Vertovec 2010). This is not, however, unproblematic and entails contradictions and paradoxes (see Gozdecka, Ercan and Kmak 2014).

The theoretical framework for our inquiry is inspired by the discourse on critical multicultural education, where questions concerning social justice and equality often come to the fore (Sleeter and Grant 2003). In this section, we position ourselves in relation to how we, in general terms, conceive multicultural education.

First, we would not like to distinguish between multicultural and intercultural education, since both concepts are used extensively, both in research and practice. Even if the concepts have different origins, they overlap each other and gain different emphases depending on the discourse, situation and perspective. On this point, we follow Holm and Zilliacus (2009), who have argued that 'it is impossible to treat and draw conclusions about intercultural and multicultural education as if there was only one kind of each, since there are several different kinds of both multicultural and intercultural education' (ibid. 23). In this context, we use the concept 'multicultural' in a very open sense, by referring to 'cultural diversity' in educational practice.

Secondly, in recent times, the concept of multiculturalism (within the discourse of multicultural education) has been regarded as problematic because of the stress on the word 'culture'. Both 'intercultural' and 'multicultural' might be understood in such a way that there are a number of stable cultural forms interacting with each other; Dervin calls this 'a mosaic of immutably different cultures' (2010). In this kind of 'essentialist' understanding, we easily use culture as the primary explanation for people's actions and behaviour. Against such a conception of cultural differentialism, multiculturalism must rather be understood in terms of cultures having no clear borders and cultural identities being conceived of as fluid rather than stable, intersecting in different sub-cultures. It has been claimed that, in some contexts, it would be better to replace concepts of 'culture' and 'identity' with 'culturality' and 'identifications' (Dervin *et al*. 2012).

A third aspect we wish to emphasise is the dimension of social justice in multicultural education. Speaking about certain cultural identities is always the result of producing otherness, of what does not belong to that particular identity (Hall 1999; Abdallah-Pretceille 2012). Different constructed identities do not have equal acceptance in society. A critical multicultural stance concerns sensitivity to various dominant hegemonies in our culture. By making visible the perspectives of alternative viewpoints to those of the given majorities, a broader picture emerges.

It is common to refer to multicultural education as something more than a technique or set of methods, since it is rather a perspective that influences all aspects of education. It pervades different forms of activities and is concerned with a minority viewpoint that avoids stereotypes and conceives of humans primarily as individuals (Gay 1998; Banks 2004; Nieto 2004; Räsänen 2010). Such a wide objective of multicultural education is founded on the assumption that plurality and cultural diversity are not just a possible but a central presupposition of education. If plurality and diversity are conceived to be something to be overcome and resolved, the task of education might be diluted. Education is always about becoming; it provides a space 'in which unique, singular individuals can come into the world' (Biesta 2005, 95).

Multicultural music education

At least two approaches to multicultural music education can be found in music research in Finland. Multicultural music education has been researched within the framework of ethnomusicology, studying musics around the world in its cultural and social contexts (Moisala 1995; Moisala and Seye 2013). Multicultural music education has also been explored from the angle of experience and musical agency (Karlsen and Westerlund 2010; Karlsen 2014) based on a Deweyan view of experience and holistic music education (Westerlund 1998; 2002).

Outside the Nordic context there is also a close bond between ethnomusicology and multicultural music education (Campbell 2004, 2010; Schippers 2010, Schippers and Campbell, 2012; Saether 2010). Volk (1998), for instance, has outlined the development of multicultural music education in the United States and Swanwick (1988), Elliott (1995) and Jorgensen (2003) among others, have in various ways explored multicultural music education in their research.

In fact, what defines multicultural music education? It is a concept that encompasses ‘the teaching of music from diverse cultural origins’ as well as ‘the teaching of music to students from diverse cultural backgrounds’ (Hebert and Karlsen 2010, 6). Issues concerning what, when and how to teach, follow from these definitions (Papageorgiou and Koutrouba 2015). Multicultural music education can also be understood as an ‘approach to instruction that incorporates diverse music cultures as an integral part of music learning and performance that is not driven by focus on a particular culture or period’ (Moore 2009, 237).

The development of multicultural music education can be seen as a movement from applying ethnocentric standards in valuing world music towards respect and awareness of cultural differences of musics (Kang 2014). Schippers (2010, 31) discusses the concept of a transcultural (rather than multicultural) approach to cultural diversity within music, when referring to an ‘in-depth exchange’ of different approaches and ideas, where they ‘are featured on an equal footing’.

Interestingly, this ‘exchange on an equal footing’ is close to some recent arguments in linking the concept of cosmopolitanism to the educational sphere. For example, Hansen (2010) holds that a cosmopolitan view does not take a starting point in any culture or community. Instead the reality of human singularity should be taken seriously as it cannot be predetermined and is revealed in a way of being embodied and situated in the world. A cosmopolitan attitude in education is to be sensitive to different categorisations that might prevent learners from recognising something radically new, different and original. In fact, it might require the ability to stand back and suspend immediate judgment, examining individual stances and habits (Mansikka and Holm 2011b).

At the same time, music teachers should not be indifferent to their own ‘cultural heritage’ as they should realize that their notions and relationships to music are generally culturally embedded (Schippers 2010, 32). ‘No one is simply human’, as Cornell and Murphy (2002, 436) have emphasised. However, this statement does not exclude an awareness of the relativity of one’s own cultural background. From an educational point of view, it is always worth asking just how inclusive one’s own perspective on music is (Elliott 1995). Teachers might ask if there are exclusionary

elements in their teaching or perceptions. Such questions are at the centre of multicultural music education.

Research questions and methodology

The empirical part of this article focuses on teachers in Swedish-speaking minority schools in Finland and their perceptions of the relationship between music and multicultural perspectives. We have proceeded from two research questions:

- *How do music teachers consider the role of music in general music education in relation to cultural diversity?*
- *What different approaches to multicultural music education can be identified in the teachers' statements and discussions?*

This article draws on the results of the work of a collaborative team of three researchers: one from Sweden and two from Finland (one Swedish-speaking and one Finnish-speaking). The data were collected via focus group interviews (Puchta and Potter, 2004) with teachers who in various ways were involved in music education or other musical activities in four Swedish-speaking Finnish schools. Other interviews were conducted with three teachers who could not participate in the focus group meetings. Nevertheless, they contributed important aspects with respect to our research questions; hence, these additional interviews took place. We aimed to identify groups of teachers who worked at schools in different geographical areas in Finland who also represented a variation of Swedish-speaking context such as Swedish-speaking communities, bilingual communities as well as Finnish-speaking communities.

One researcher contacted the headmasters of four schools and received contact information for the teachers who worked with music education in various ways at each school. Thereafter, the researcher contacted the teachers directly to inform them about the purpose of the study and invite them to participate as interviewees. It was made clear that the teachers' participation was fully voluntarily and that they would not be mentioned by name. However, the Swedish-speaking community in Finland is small and therefore anonymity could not be fully guaranteed. The language used during the interviews and in the correspondence with the interviewees was Swedish.

There were several reasons for using focus group interviews to collect the data. First, we aimed to encompass more collective views rather than individual opinions. In focus group interviews, topics are introduced by the facilitator and the participants are encouraged to discuss these topics from various perspectives (Wibeck 2010). Secondly, from a critical perspective, we were interested in creating a space for the groups of teachers to discuss diverse perspectives on these matters. Each group met twice, which allowed for progression and development in their discussions and for interplay between their specific and general experiences, views and ideas in relation to a topic.

- *Group A* consisted of four teachers (A1-4) in a school in a bilingual municipality in western Finland. One of the teachers was not able to participate during one of the interviews and therefore s/he was interviewed individually (A4).
- *Group B* consisted of four teachers (B1-4) in a school in a predominantly Swedish-speaking municipality with a mainly immigrant population in western Finland. One of the teachers was not able to participate during one of the focus group interviews and therefore s/he was interviewed individually (B4).
- *Group C* consisted of three teachers (C1-3) in a school in a small, bilingual town in southern Finland.
- *Group D* consisted of three teachers (D1-3) in a Swedish-speaking school situated in a Finnish-speaking area. In addition, one teacher, who was not able to participate in the focus group, was interviewed separately (D4).

Groups A and B met twice for approximately one hour per session. In addition, one individual interview was carried out at each of those two schools. Group C met twice; however, the first time was merely a brief introductory meeting while the second time was a full hour-long focus group interview. Group D met once for a full hour-long focus group interview, while the researcher also met one individual teacher twice: first for an introductory meeting and then for an individual interview.

In analysing the data, we used qualitative content analysis and thematization (Denzin and Lincoln 2000), where the focus was on an interpretation of *what* was said, rather than *how* something was said. We also applied a critical perspective (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994, 152) in relation to the data that was derived from the participants' views. Thus, the data presentation captures the informants' views in relation to their specific context, while the researchers' interpretation and analysis of the data are based on a consideration of the informants' perceptions from a critical position within a larger, more general context.

All interviews were carried out within a time range of six months during the winter and spring of 2013; however, the interval between the first and second focus group interview at each school varied. The interviews were recorded and transcribed and the transcriptions were shared, discussed and analysed collectively by the three researchers.

Findings

In several instances, it took some time for the teachers to discuss, define and grasp the concepts of multiculturalism and cultural diversity in relation to their teaching activities. While much was discussed on a theoretical and/or political level, it was not necessarily something that they would connect to their own practice. As one teacher said, 'We need to tease out what multiculturalism is . . . it is really hard because now we are discussing traditions. I mean, I do not really grasp this diversity' (A1). Multiculturalism and cultural diversity did not belong to the general educational subject areas in this particular school, which implied that there were difficulties in accommodating the concept in relation to the traditional objectives of education. This seems to correlate with earlier studies, that some Swedish-speaking teachers in Finland do experience themselves as being on the periphery of the national and international discourses of multicultural education (Mansikka and Holm, 2011a). However, the same group of teachers acknowledged that their own cultural background gave them good presuppositions for dealing with cultural diversity. It was held that 'By nature, I think, we are generally quite good at approaching other cultures' (A1).

The two assumptions above were mentioned in the same discussions. Seemingly contradictory, they nevertheless can be interpreted on different levels. The first one

refers to the factual state of being somewhat outside of theoretical discourse on multiculturalism and its implications for education. The group members said they did not feel competent or they felt a bit aside from, discussing a topic much debated in society at large. The second claim refers to an experienced quality of their collective identity as a language minority. Hence, there is an interesting oscillation between a theoretical lack of competence and 'positive' dispositions with regard to multicultural education that has not really been resolved. Not all teachers discussed the topic this this explicitly but it was a common theme among most of the teacher groups.

We now turn to our first research question *How do music teachers consider the role of music in general music education in relation to cultural diversity?* We deal with the question by conceiving it from three different perspectives, corresponding to the classical *trivium,* where teacher, subject and student are seen as three irreducible parts of the teaching and learning process (cf. Kansanen, 1999).

Teaching practices and diversity perspectives

On a general level and for many teachers, music in the comprehensive school is perceived as a subject that does not have too much weight for students; it is quite low on the '*importance scale'* (B1) but at the same time is often a subject that students like (cf. Juvonen *et al.* 2012, 7-23). It can be a challenge for teachers to maintain the popularity and informality typical of art subjects but at the same time achieve learning objectives for the subject stated in the curriculum.

The national curriculum for teachers in Finland regarding music (and art subjects in general) is fairly open, as it is more like a framework for teachers to design and plan their teaching, giving no specific information about the methodology to be used or detailed content of the teaching. (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004; National Board of Education 2014; Sepp 2014, 43). It has been claimed that freedom and trust in teachers' work are essential features in attracting so many students into the teaching profession in Finland. Teachers' workplaces provide them with professional autonomy and a strong sense of self-confidence as professionals (Sahlberg 2011).

Some teachers in our study emphasised the creative aspect of the subject. In discussing cultural diversity in teaching practice, one teacher said that, 'there are new

things coming all the time and one must dare to see the possibilities. The day one stops considering the possibilities, one needs to start dealing with something else' (A4). This refers to the need for a teacher constantly to adapt to new and changing conditions within the educational context.

Other teachers focused more on their limitations in teaching practice and how they experienced a gap between what they would like to do and the actual possibilities of realising these goals. Two aspects came to the fore: coping with diversity and time management. A major challenge was the notion that pupils had very different knowledge levels; one teacher said that the most important 'difference is not language or one's nationality but previous knowledge' (B1), which challenges teachers to organise teaching so that everybody really does participate. It has to do with difficulties in individualising the teaching while, at the same time, providing control and structure for the group. It is difficult, according to many teachers, to navigate between a teacher-centred activity where the lessons are structured and a pupil-oriented approach with freedom of choice and individualized activity for the pupils. This, combined with the relatively few music lessons available, makes the teaching activity challenging.

The subject of music from a multicultural perspective

Some teachers had a quite straightforward understanding of how music and multicultural aspects are intertwined. This was usually connected to a conception of the universal nature of music. The subject of music was perceived as a universal language. Universalism was defended by relating the 'same notes, the same chords' to different cultures (A1) and whereas we only have 'to listen, in that we all have the same two ears' (B1).

Music was, by means of its universal nature, conceived as a multicultural subject. The multicultural elements are integrated in such a natural way that, in dealing with different kinds of songs, one also deals with multiculturalism. Music was seen as having a specific role as an 'integration subject in school' where 'food can be one part, music can be one part, dance can be one part' (B3). They particularly highlighted how music offers opportunities for immigrant pupils to express themselves independently of their language skills. Furthermore, music was described as having

the potential to bring people together and create a feeling of community: ‘Music can function as a bonfire. This is where you meet and there everyone is equal’ (A3). Such a universal stance in relation to the concept of world music has been discussed by Schippers (2010, 27) as well. It may vary from an idealistic concept of “one music” to a more pluralist view on the unity of a human pursuit of music.

Some teachers led the discussion in another direction, from the universal nature of music towards a more particular stance. This gave rise to a reflection about the relationship between ‘us and them’, between one’s own music culture and ‘other’ cultures. One teacher defined multicultural music education as confronting or ‘meeting diversity’ (A1) and being aware that one’s own perspective is only one among several. ‘Western music […] has theoretically very few components [half notes]’ (A3), compared to some other musical systems. Music was here seen as culturally situated and sensitivity to this makes room for more reflective practices in teaching, more variations and differences.

What kind of music ought to be prioritised in teaching/learning practice? Finnish music education is built on ideals of democratic education. Co-operation, activity and interaction are addressed as important goals in the curriculum. Different objectives are expressed with the intention to support pupils’ overall growth and with an emphasis on the development of active music-making and on the development of musicianship (National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004; Sepp 2014, 28-30). The national guidelines give teachers little instruction on this topic.

Our interviewed teachers said little about what kind of music ought to be in the centre of education. The emphasis was often on “not directly musical objectives”, such as developing pupils’ personalities and respect for diversity, as well as the importance of teachers’ own attitudes towards music in stimulating pupils’ interest in the subject.

The question of musical content was basically dealt with in two different ways. On the one hand, it was seen as a question of dealing with both traditional cultural heritage, as well as what appears in the pupils' everyday lives, which is mainly Western popular music. On the other hand, some teachers did not take musical genres as their starting point. Instead their emphasis was on the educational process and the development of musicianship. The primary aim was to create a diverse practice that was inclusive, not only where everybody participated but also where pupils were

challenged and exposed to new impulses. In that respect, genre or content were of secondary importance. One teacher said that the pupils have totally 'accepted what I bring' and experienced her quite free from any particular expectations, especially with regard to popular music (D4). This was an example of a view where inclusive activity in the classroom is not restricted to a certain genre.

Perceiving pupils as musical agents from a diversity perspective

As we have seen, the pupils' cultural backgrounds are not always mentioned as the main area of multicultural approaches in the classroom. Nevertheless, the question about the cultural background of individual pupils was not perceived as irrelevant; there were differences in how diversity was perceived. On the one hand, there was a sensitivity to 'be aware of what they [pupils] will bring with them' so that the teacher can integrate it into the teaching practice. The cultural diversity must, however, be dealt with 'in a context so it will be meaningful for the children' (A4). Students were, first and foremost, thought of as individuals and as having a unique role in the world. We found one thread in the discussion that related the pupils to a framework of pluralism and individual differences.

On the other hand, many teachers spoke about their students belonging to a specific group or in certain categories. The most common form, regarding our main theme, was the distinction some made between native and immigrant pupils but there were other distinctions as well. There was a certain reluctance to distinguish between native and immigrant pupils when it comes to musical identity:

> The adults are more the immigrants. The children are not really immigrants [...]. They [the children] might think themselves that songs in their own language are strange, as they listen to common pop and rock here in Finland. […] How do the children react to ethnic music? If there is a cool beat in the music they will recognise this, but if not, they might think: What kind of strange thing is this? (B3).

According to some teachers, all pupils identify with (Western) popular youth culture as 'their music'. The problem with such a notion is that it generalises the musical identity of young people as monolithic. Not paying attention to individual differences might be related to the habit of approaching pupils as a homogenous group (Mahon,

2006). If differences are not being discerned, the question of equal treatment might not have to arise.

Another theme that emerged in relation to pupils as musical agents was about safety and a sense of belonging (in relation to pupils' needs). In proceeding from the experiences of the pupils, the teacher will encounter a landscape where there is an inclination towards something familiar: 'the majority like to listen to something that they recognise from before as it creates a safe feeling. It is the language of emotions which expresses that you are at home in a way' (C1). In homogeneous classrooms, there are very few pupils who want to think 'outside the box': 'Only a few are like Columbus, adventurers, who want change and experience; this demands more courage, energy and curiosity' (C1). This certainly had consequences for teaching practice, as well as for the kind of musical material that was used in many schools.

Responding to the focus group interview question, which addressed what would happen if their schools and classes were to become significantly more culturally diverse and how that would affect their teaching, one teacher said:

> I believe it would take much longer to find home but it could be an interesting journey. Perhaps a much more interesting journey. Probably a thousand times more laborious. You would be as lost as anyone else, not really knowing where on the map you are and I think that much of the time would be spent finding the place on the map. (C1)

Regarding our first research question *How do music teachers consider the role of music in general music education in relation to cultural diversity*, three different aspects of the educational field of music, including teaching practice, the subject of music and pupils as musical agents, have been explored so far in this analysis, and the key themes can be explained as an oscillation between two poles.

MUSIC EDUCATION	OSCILLATION BETWEEN
TEACHING PRACTICE	Limitations and Possibilities
THE SUBJECT OF MUSIC	Universalism and Particularity
PUPILS AS MUSICAL AGENTS	Familiarity (home) and Unfamiliarity (journey)

Figure 1. Teaching music from a diversity perspective

Three ways of conceiving multicultural music education

We then turn to our second research question *What different approaches to multicultural music education can be identified in the teachers' discussions?* We could discern three different ways in which the teachers spoke about multicultural education in relation to their practice. We have called them additive, inclusive and critical perspectives.

Seeing multicultural education from an *additive* perspective means that cultural diversity adds to the majority's perspective. Some teachers perceived the subject of music as an opportunity to elaborate on expressions of cultural diversity for those pupils from the cultural majority in the school. Music can be a subject in which immigrant pupils can make their own cultural background visible. Teachers referred to certain festival days at school where 'music from different countries was played and they talked about their countries . . . [and there was] food from different countries of those [immigrant groups] that had the highest representation here'. By means of exhibitions, photographs, pictures and movies, it was possible to 'look into various cultures' and from the majority pupils' perspective, 'it was, of course, a lot to sit and listen to, watch and hear' (B2). Multicultural education was seen as an addition to the usual classroom activity, something that 'would connect to themes in the class or activities that classes do' *(*A4).

The expression 'looking into cultures' is interesting in itself as it reveals how relations between different groups are understood from an additive perspective. The concept of

‘culture’ is conceived with clear borders. The educational activity ascribes a certain role and identity to minorities, whereas majority pupils become spectators. Despite good intentions, this kind of activity might have an exclusive effect, confirming existing prejudices. Such an additive approach can be seen as clinging to a division between ‘us’ and ‘them’, revealing an inability to provide pervasive multicultural education for all students.

Seeing multicultural education from an *inclusive* perspective was a much more common topic in the second of the focus interviews (in those cases two interviews were being made with the same group). There was a shift, over time, from an additive to an inclusive perspective, most probably due to the reflective process that had taken place between the interviews. Inclusive arguments focus more on the individual development and issues of identity of their pupils. The concept of culture is not irrelevant but plays a slightly different role in the discourse, as in this teacher’s statement:

> It is about the development of the children’s personalities […] music is sort of connected to the time and the situation and it is a bit different in different cultures [it is important] to gain respect for how different cultures […] perhaps [you can] begin with what you can call what the children represent, so they feel important and [express] what they stand for. (A4)

The purpose of multicultural music education from an inclusive perspective, is more of a project for *all* students, rather than something additive to the existing majority culture. One teacher with previous experience of teaching immigrant pupils emphasised the ability to be flexible and proceed from the pupils you have, as a resource, ‘but not to force them to represent a certain culture’ (A4). It is important to use creativity in such a way that different cultural expressions enter a context that is meaningful for all pupils, but avoids categorisation between individual pupils and culture. That requires the teacher to organise the lessons so that individual strengths can be discovered and developed.

> It is like finding a common home [ground] that everyone will live with and accept […] and then we will try this and more or less go through the whole group until we will find something we can build on and make something in

> common. I know this since we all have music in common and everyone cannot just sit down and do their own music in their own way. (C1)

What is this ‘home’ that can be shared by everyone but encompasses cultural diversity? Today, the concept of music education without any specific canon (or centre) has generally been acknowledged within the field of music education. This implies that the music classroom should be ‘a place of reconciliation in which musical differences are celebrated’ (Kang 2014, 7). Navigating between different perspectives provokes reflection, appreciation and criticism concerning what is universal, which brings us closer to a *critical* perspective in music education. Teaching music, from such perspective, cannot be settled beforehand, but must be grounded in the experiences of the pupils (cf. Hansen 2010, 162), and include reflection on how music is intertwined in society as a whole within economic or political power structures.

There were some critical points made during our interviews, but surprisingly few. Some teachers mentioned how to extend their comfort zones, both for themselves and their pupils and the need for their pupils to encounter something beyond the popular music they listen to outside school (D4). One teacher (A3) emphasized the importance of educating pupils to become ‘critical consumers’, because ‘music today utilises people much more than people utilise music’. Overall, however, this perspective was not very extensive.

Discussion

By interviewing four groups of music teachers from different Swedish-speaking schools and areas in Finland, we have explored how multicultural music education is understood and experienced as part of general education by those teachers. As an outcome, we have identified three different perspectives and approaches in relation to their practice. They are summarised in the following figure.

MULTICULTURAL APRROACH	ELEMENTS
ADDITIVE	• Projects and activities in addition to usual activities • View of 'stable cultures' interacting with each other • Teaching practice according to given 'methods'
INCLUSIVE	• Conceiving the subject of music without a strong 'canon' • Being sensitive to individual rather than group differences • Flexible and 'situation-bound' teaching practice
CRITICAL	• Questioning established practices and cultural forms • Focus on the intersection between individual and societal power structures • Teaching practice enhance critical and reflective awareness

Figure 2. Three approaches in multicultural education

The additive and inclusive approaches dominated the findings from our interviews, which led us to dwell on what a more substantial and deliberate *critical* approach within multicultural music education could entail. By developing some arguments from our data, we would like to raise following three points.

First, music education is part of arts education and artistic activity has often been socially critical. However, very little of this critical dimension filters through into general education. Music teachers in Finland have a certain freedom to develop their own particular teaching practice, but there is little time and support available to do something different from the traditional ways of teaching where they either engage pupils in singing and playing or deal with the basics of history or theory of music. Our focus group interview data revealed that there was significant change regarding critical reflection on this between the first and second interviews within the groups. In the first interview, the emphasis was on concrete educational activities, and how these were being carried out. In the second interview, ideas became richer and a bit more 'outside the box', where more focus was put on potential solutions. This indicates the

importance of creating space for teachers to discuss their teaching reflexively and even be challenged in their activity. From the interviews, we could see the impact of participating in a broader discourse on multicultural music education.

Second, despite the inclusive approach that some of these teachers represented, there were, overall, few critical reflections concerning multicultural music education encompassing a learning process for all rather than a few. There was also a certain reluctance to develop a more cross-cultural dimension in music education. Teachers would benefit from introducing less well-known material and trying to make it accessible to their pupils. From this point of view, it is important for the teacher together with the students to be able to tread foreign ground, to *transform the unknown to something familiar*.

The self-understanding of the pupils can be enhanced through other-understanding, by exploring 'unfamiliar musical cultures' (Elliott 1995, 209). Moreover, it is important to approach multicultural music education from both a cross-cultural as well as a cultural-specific perspective (cf. Campbell 2004, Kang 2014). The cultural-specific perspective is often tied to the societal context of musics, which was a topic that was barely mentioned or discussed in our data.

Third, in Finland and the other Nordic countries, it is common that pupils have opportunities to influence both the content and methods used in their music lessons. This implies that teachers might suggest that pupils come up with content as an invitation to participate. It is a pupil-centered activity and commonly spread but the content often mirrors the global homogenisation that pervades Western youth culture. In a certain sense, popular culture highlighted through media, might replace music teachers as authorities in the classroom. If so, it seems to be relevant to talk about a certain 'McDonaldization' (Ritzer 1996) within music education that often excludes cultural diversity. By utilizing a critical lens in multicultural music education, teachers can make visible contemporary issues such as these kinds of exclusionary mechanisms.

Our study contributes to the empirical research on teachers' views on multicultural music education. Our point of departure differs from Karlsen's (2014) study of Nordic music teachers, who work in multicultural environments or from the study of Papageorgiou and Koutrouba (2015) that explores Greek school advisors' views on

multicultural music education. In our study, the teachers themselves belonged to a language minority; we wanted to capture the role that multicultural music education had in their everyday teaching and discover how their thinking about it was articulated and developed.

The three approaches (the additive, the inclusive and the critical) were derived from our interviews. Overall, teaching music within language minority schools does not seem to differ, with respect to multicultural education, from teaching music in majority language schools. However, some teachers highlighted a critical approach, which has not been commonly discussed in previous research literature.

At a time when pluralism, cultural diversity and globalization are rooted in the life-world of the pupils, the critical perspective is an important field to highlight. Multicultural music education can become a platform where questions about social justice and equality, by the means of music, more frequently appear. Empirical research is needed in this most important field, both from teachers' and pupils' perspectives.

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